



NEWS RELEASE

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

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Kirtland sergeant helps save baby's life

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KIRTLAND AIR FORCE BASE, N.M. — Senior Master Sgt. Melanie Fitzgibbons, first sergeant for the 377th Transportation Squadron, helped save a baby's life Saturday.

Fitzgibbons was driving west on I-40 early Saturday evening when she saw two frantic women near a car pulled off to the side of the road. She slowed to see what was happening and her 12-year-old daughter, Rebecca, saw that there was a baby choking near the parked vehicle.

Fitzgibbons stopped her car and ran to the aid of the baby while Rebecca called 911. The women, the baby's grandmother and aunt, were unable to help the child, so Fitzgibbons immediately checked the infant to see if he was breathing or had a pulse.

"The baby was blue, there was some blood near its mouth and I didn't get a pulse," said Fitzgibbons.

She checked the baby's airway and started mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. But his chest was not moving as she tried to blow air into his tiny lungs.

A man named Curtis McBeth had also stopped when he saw the commotion. He came to Fitzgibbons' side and they attempted to resuscitate the infant. He began to pump the baby's chest, but since they weren't sure if the baby's heart had actually stopped, they decided to roll the infant on its side and start over.

They checked his airway again. This time they caught a glimpse of what turned out to be a marshmallow lodged in the infant's throat.

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Fitzgibbons removed the marshmallow and blew a few breaths into the infant's mouth.

This time, their efforts paid off. The baby started breathing on his own.

"I just thank God I was there to help," said McBeth, who works at Rich Ford in Albuquerque.

"If felt real good when he started to turn pink and breathe again," said Fitzgibbons. "And the grandmother called me Sunday and said there was no brain damage and he's doing fine."

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Note to editors: For more information or to interview Fitzgibbons, call Senior Airman Paul Gritton, (505) 846-4238/5991. Call Rich Ford to speak to Curtis McBeth.